

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 6 1976

DATE ENTERED NOV 23 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **O'Donnell, I.D., House**

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 105 Clark Avenue

___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Billings

___ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Montana

CODE

30

COUNTY

Yellowstone

CODE

111

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- ___ DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- ___ STRUCTURE
- ___ SITE
- ___ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- ___ PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- ___ BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- ___ IN PROCESS
- ___ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- ___ UNOCCUPIED
- ___ WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- ___ YES: RESTRICTED
- ___ YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- ___ AGRICULTURE
- ___ COMMERCIAL
- ___ EDUCATIONAL
- ___ ENTERTAINMENT
- ___ GOVERNMENT
- ___ INDUSTRIAL
- ___ MILITARY
- ___ MUSEUM
- ___ PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ___ RELIGIOUS
- ___ SCIENTIFIC
- ___ TRANSPORTATION
- ___ OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. M. A. (Helene) Wallis

STREET & NUMBER

105 Clark Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Billings

___ VICINITY OF

STATE

Montana

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Yellowstone County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Billings

STATE

Montana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

1973 Survey of Historic Architecture in Montana, John N. DeHaas, Jr.

DATE

November 19, 1973

___ FEDERAL STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Recreation & Parks Div., Dept. of Fish & Game, 1420 E. 6th Av

CITY, TOWN

Helena

STATE

Montana

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The O'Donnell House is a two and one half story frame mansion erected in 1905 by I.D. O'Donnell. It stands today as a reminder of his contributions to agriculture in Eastern Montana.

The building is sheathed in narrow horizontal lap siding and sits on a foundation of sandstone quarried from the rimrocks of Billings. Documentation of the construction indicates fire-brick infill between the studs. A three story octagonal tower sits at the southeast corner of the rectangular house, with a single story entry porch wrapped around the house and tower at that corner. Full height bay windows are found on the east and west facades. A second story bay window projects from the south facade. Wood shingles cover the steep hip roof, the octagonal roof over the tower, and the several dormers and gables which project from the main roof. Two tall brick chimneys rise above.

The exterior is adorned with several decorative elements. A centrally located, second story, oval window with neo-classical inframent lets light into a dressing room on the front (south) side. Neo-classical floral panels decorate the spandrels between the second and third story tower windows and a neo-classical pediment with finial tops a stained glass window on the east facade which lights the main staircase. Numerous other windows contain stained glass, diamond-shaped panes in wood frames, or leaded bottle glass. Paired wooden consoles with elaborate scroll work hang from the wide roof overhang.

The large mansion contains many rooms. For example, entering the main floor from the south one encounters the vestibule, reception hall and central hall. To the west of the central hall one finds from south to north, parlor, living room, back stairs and kitchen. East of the central hall are the octagonal room (part of the reception hall), main staircase, library, and dining room. A pantry and butler's pantry are located between the kitchen and dining room. The second floor has numerous bedrooms, bath, and sewing room and the back stairs lead up to the attic.

Numerous woods are found in the floors and woodwork of the O'Donnell House, including oak, cherry, maple, sycamore and pine. Several sets of sliding doors are veneered in wood to match the selected wood in each particular room and brass hardware is found throughout. Two first floor and one second floor fireplaces are decoratively finished in wood and ceramic tile.

The owner and resident of the house, Mrs. Wallis, is the daughter of the original owner. Much of the furniture is original, the house has been well maintained and it retains the character of the age in which it was built.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1904-05 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Eams & Sawyer/Link & Haire

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The O'Donnell house stands as a monument to a preeminent figure in Montana's agricultural development. Ignatius D. (Bud) O'Donnell was born in Ontario in 1860; he came to Montana in 1882, working first in the Maiden gold fields, then as a ranch hand. He was eventually employed by Frederick Billings (founder of the city of the same name) and supervised the reorganization and reconstruction of the large irrigation system known as the Big Ditch on the Billings ranch. The system was later purchased by a group of farmers, who installed O'Donnell as president of the irrigation company.

In 1888, O'Donnell purchased the Hesper Farm and began his experimentation with irrigation and agricultural methods on alfalfa, sugar beets, wheat and oats. He was instrumental in establishing the sugar beet industry in Montana. The beet-processing plant he built was purchased by the Great Western Sugar Company of Denver, which is still active in the economy of the area. In addition, O'Donnell built the first creamery in Billings and founded the Billings Foundry and Machine Company.

As supervisor of irrigation for the U.S. Reclamation Commission (1916-1920) which he helped organize, O'Donnell developed methods of water usage and payments for irrigation systems covering a seventeen state area, and advised settlers on crop planting and marketing.

On January 1, 1905, O'Donnell moved his family into this new house on Clark Avenue, then on the outskirts of Billings. The architects were the firm of J. G. Link and C. S. Haire, one of the most prominent in the state at that time. Builders for the new house were Valdo Eams and Sawyer. The new home was large enough to accommodate Mr. & Mrs. O'Donnell and their family of six children.

The house still has much of its early furniture and decor and is a good example of the architecture of the early twentieth century.

The Country Gentleman, in its August, 1919 issue, published an article concerning I. D. O'Donnell, whom it designated "The Best Farmer in Montana." He was a pioneer in irrigation and agriculture crop development trustee of the Billings Polytechnic Institute, served on the Montana Horticulture Board, Montana Water Conservation Board, Yellowstone and Midland Empire Fair Boards, Montana Stock Commission and many other civic and governmental organizations. O'Donnell died January 28, 1946, after more than sixty years of service to Montana and its agriculture.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Helen F. Sanders, A History of Montana, Chicago, 1913, II, 1193-94
 Tom Stout, Montana, Its Story and Biography, Chicago, 1921, II, 383-5
Country Gentleman (magazine), August 2, 1919, pp. 6, 7, 34.
Billings Gazette (newspaper), Billings, Montana, January 29, 1948

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than .5 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	2	6	9	3	0	0	0	5	0	7	2	4	3	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

B

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

C

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

D

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The lot sits on the northwest corner of Clark Avenue and 1st Street West.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Susan W. Curtis, Historian

John N. DeHaas, Jr., Architect / Fredric L. Quie, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Recreation & Parks Division, Department of Fish & Game

May 5, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1420 E 6th Avenue

(406) 449-3750

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Helena

Montana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Paul Holliday

TITLE Montana State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE May 5, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Robert B. Rettig

DATE 11/23/77

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

Charles A. ...

DATE 4-17-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER